



# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

<b>SUBJECT</b> <b>TRANSPORTATION OF CONSUMERS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS</b>	<b>POLICY NO.</b> <b>202.22</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> <b>04/15/05</b>	<b>PAGE</b> <b>1 of 4</b>
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>  Director	<b>SUPERSEDES</b> <b>202.22</b>	<b>ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE</b> <b>02/01/01</b>	<b>DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S)</b> <b>1</b>

## PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy and procedure regarding the transportation of consumers and their family members.
- 1.2 To ensure that transportation of consumers and any of their family members involves as little risk as possible to all individuals.

## POLICY

- 2.1 Under certain circumstances DMH employees may transport consumers and/or their family members in assisting them to access needed benefits, resources, community agencies, mental health programs, etc. This service is provided in a County-business related situation that furthers the consumer's progress toward achieving Service Plan goals. This policy sets the conditions and procedures that must be fulfilled in providing transportation.
- 2.2 This policy applies only to consumers on voluntary status who want such transportation and only to DMH employees who are willing to provide transportation within the conditions specified in this policy.
- 2.3 Volunteers may not be permitted to use their personal car or County vehicle for any County business, including, but not limited to, the transportation of clients and their families, other volunteers, County employees, or members of the public.
- 2.4 An employee may transport a consumer/family member when:
  - 2.4.1 The employee is an approved County mileage permittee (applicable only when using a private vehicle).
  - 2.4.2 The transportation of the consumer/family member is required for effective service delivery and is County-business related.
  - 2.4.3 It has been determined that no other reasonable means of transportation is available to meet the particular transportation need, including, but not limited to, the use of relatives



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and friends of the consumer, public transportation, including taxi, and transportation provided by other public agencies such as Los Angeles City's "Dial-a-Ride."

- 2.4.4 When a County vehicle is not reasonably available, an employee may use his/her private vehicle. A County vehicle is considered reasonably available, in non-emergent circumstances, if it can be obtained no less than ten (10) minutes before the need to transport.
- 2.5 The transportation of the consumer must be direct from point of origin to destination, without any unrelated stops.
- 2.6 Transportation of the consumer must be consistent with provisions of the Department's "Illness and Injury Prevention Program" Manual.
- 2.7 Whenever a consumer is being transported, the driver must ensure that the requirements of the California Vehicle Code are met including the use of passenger seat restraints and the requirement of rear placement of child passenger restraint systems (child safety seats) for children under six (6) years of age or weighing less than 60 pounds.
- 2.8 Managers at the level of District Chief or higher may set additional requirements and prohibitions for employees in their programs beyond those established by this policy as their needs require. This includes establishing requirements that a second employee accompany the employee/driver and consumer.
- 2.9 No employee shall transport an individual who:
- 2.9.1 Is subject to involuntary treatment or custody under Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 5150 or 5250; or
  - 2.9.2 Is subject to a Conservatorship or Guardianship, unless accompanied by the Conservator or Guardian, or there is written authority to transport from the Conservator or Guardian; or
  - 2.9.3 Is a ward or dependent child of the Juvenile Court unless written authority has been obtained from the Probation Officer, Children's Services Worker or the Court, as applicable; or
  - 2.9.4 Is under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance.
- 2.10 Motorcycles and scooters may never be used to transport a mental health consumer/family member(s).



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### **PROCEDURE**

- 3.1 The procedures below shall be followed whenever DMH employees are considering, planning, and/or providing transportation for consumers/family members.
- 3.1.1 Employees shall determine whether transporting the consumer/family member is required for effective service delivery.
- 3.1.2 Employees shall determine whether the transportation need can reasonably be met by other means, i.e., relatives, caretaker, friends, taxi, public transportation. If so, other means shall be used.
- 3.1.3 Employees shall determine whether they know the consumer and his/her history well enough to be certain of the consumer's cooperation during transport.
- 3.1.4 Employees shall discuss with the consumer/family member the possibility of providing transportation for them, including the requirement for the use of proper safety precautions (seat belts) and determine whether this would be acceptable to them.
- 3.1.5 Employees shall determine whether a County vehicle is reasonably available. A County vehicle is considered reasonable available, in non-emergent circumstances, if it can be used no less than ten (10) minutes before the need to transport. If so, the County vehicle is to be used. If not, employees who are mileage permittees may provide transportation in their private vehicles.
- 3.1.6 Whenever employees are uncertain that transporting a consumer/family member in a specific instance is safe and/or appropriate, they are to consult their supervisor **prior to providing transportation.**
- 3.1.7 Prior to transporting passengers, drivers must ensure that the requirements of the California Department of Motor Vehicles Vehicle Code are met for the use of passenger seat belts and the rear placement of approved child passenger restraint systems (child safety seats) for the transportation of children under 60 pounds or less than six (6) years old.
- 3.1.7.1 The DMH Administrative Support Bureau should be contacted to obtain child safety seats.



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- 3.1.8 Employees shall document in the consumer's chart their transportation of consumers/family members, including the rationale for transporting them and consultation with their supervisor, when applicable.

### **AUTHORITY**

Department of Mental Health Policy  
DMH "Illness and Injury Prevention Program" Manual  
California Department of Motor Vehicles Vehicle Code, Sections 27315 and 27360(b)  
National Highway Transportation Safety Administration Guidelines

**REVIEW DATE**      This policy shall be reviewed on or before April 2010.